



# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development  
Office of Economic Advisors

## FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

BARRON, CHIPPEWA, CLARK, DUNN, EAU CLAIRE, PEPIN, PIERCE, POLK, ST. CROIX

September  
2004

### Labor Force Shrinks as Summer Jobs End

The number of residents in the labor force in West Central Wisconsin was smaller in August. The labor force shrunk as both the number of employed and unemployed residents declined. In spite of the reduction in employment the regional unemployment rate declined in August to 4.1 percent from 4.2 percent in July.

The unadjusted unemployment rate in the Eau Claire-Chippewa metropolitan area, however, rose

in August to 4.0 percent from 3.9 percent in July. The number of unemployed in the metro area increased in August as the number of employed declined.

The decline in the number of workers in both the metro area and the west central region followed historical patterns in August. The number of employed in the region has declined from July to August in each of the last ten years. Unemployment also typically de-

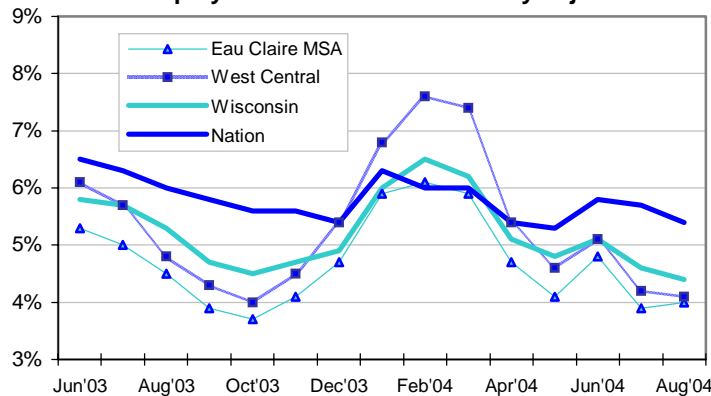
clines in August; and it did drop in the region. But contrary to historical trends the number of unemployed in the Eau Claire-Chippewa metro area rose in August.

The atypical increase in unemployment not only bumped up the unadjusted unemployment rate in the metro area but amplified the increase in the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate from 4.4 to 4.8 percent. One year ago the seasonally adjusted rate in the metro area was 5.3 percent. The seasonally adjusted rate in the state rose from 4.7 percent in July to 4.8 percent in August while the national rate dropped from 5.5 to 5.4 percent.

The number of unemployed declined in eight of the nine counties in the west central region, but not in Chippewa County. There the number of unemployed rose from 1,365 in July to 1,450 in August and the unadjusted unemployment rate increased from 4.2 to 4.5 percent. In late July and early August lay offs from manufacturing employers were partially responsible for the spike in the number of unemployed in the county.

Overall, the number of jobs

Unemployment Rates-Not seasonally adjusted



	Jun'03	Jul'03	Aug'03	Jun'04	Jul'04	Aug'04
Eau Claire MSA	5.3%	5.0%	4.5%	4.8%	3.9%	4.0%
West Central	6.1%	5.7%	4.8%	5.1%	4.2%	4.1%
Wisconsin	5.8%	5.7%	5.3%	5.1%	4.6%	4.4%
Nation	6.5%	6.3%	6.0%	5.8%	5.7%	5.4%

### Civilian Labor Force Estimates\* for West Central Wisconsin counties: August 2004

	Barron			Chippewa			Clark			Dunn			Eau Claire Co.		
	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03
Labor force	25,261	25,681	25,173	32,531	32,778	31,856	16,783	17,250	16,391	23,173	23,529	22,825	56,764	57,392	55,809
Employed	24,100	24,515	23,940	31,081	31,413	30,359	16,013	16,445	15,529	22,392	22,705	21,922	54,656	55,240	53,387
Unemployed	1,161	1,166	1,233	1,450	1,365	1,497	770	805	862	781	824	903	2,108	2,152	2,422
% unemployed	4.6	4.5	4.9	4.5	4.2	4.7	4.6	4.7	5.3	3.4	3.5	4.0	3.7	3.7	4.3

	Pepin			Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			West Central region		
	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03
Labor force	3,315	3,456	3,240	21,629	21,857	21,414	22,926	23,103	23,391	38,582	39,127	38,637	240,964	244,173	238,736
Employed	3,154	3,289	3,086	20,804	20,984	20,500	21,897	22,040	22,167	36,914	37,234	36,374	231,011	233,865	227,264
Unemployed	161	167	154	825	873	914	1,029	1,063	1,224	1,668	1,893	2,263	9,953	10,308	11,472
% unemployed	4.9	4.8	4.8	3.8	4.0	4.3	4.5	4.6	5.2	4.3	4.8	5.9	4.1	4.2	4.8

\* not seasonally adjusted

## Industry Employment Estimates for West Central Wisconsin: August 2004

(Employment in thousands)	Barron			Clark			Dunn			Pepin		
	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03
Total Nonfarm	21.8	21.8	21.8	10.2	10.2	10.0	15.5	15.6	15.4	2.2	2.2	2.2
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.2
Manufacturing	6.6	6.6	6.6	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.2	2.2	2.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Trade	3.5	3.5	3.5	1.4	1.4	1.3	2.7	2.8	2.7	0.5	0.5	0.5
Transportation & Utilities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1.7	1.7	1.8	0.1	0.1	0.1
Financial Activities	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.1
Education & Health Services	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.6	1.6	1.5	0.3	0.3	0.3
Leisure & Hospitality	1.9	1.9	1.9	0.9	0.9	0.8	1.6	1.6	1.5	0.3	0.3	0.2
Info/Prof. & Bus.Serv./Other	1.7	1.7	1.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total Government	4.1	4.1	4.0	1.9	1.9	1.9	3.1	3.2	3.3	0.4	0.5	0.5
	Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			Eau Claire MSA		
	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03	Aug '04	Jul '04	Aug '03
Total Nonfarm	9.8	9.7	9.5	14.2	14.1	14.6	27.8	27.5	27.4	78.2	78.3	77.1
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.8	0.8	0.8	2.0	2.0	1.8	3.9	4.0	3.6
Manufacturing	1.1	1.1	1.1	3.5	3.6	3.7	5.5	5.4	5.8	11.5	11.4	11.0
Trade	0.6	0.6	0.8	2.2	2.2	2.2	4.5	4.5	4.3	12.5	12.4	12.8
Transportation & Utilities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.1	1.1	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8
Financial Activities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.2	1.2	1.1	3.7	3.7	3.7
Education & Health Services	1.1	1.2	1.1	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.9	2.8	2.8	12.7	12.7	12.5
Leisure & Hospitality	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.3	3.7	3.7	3.5	8.2	8.2	8.1
Information/Prof. & Bus.Serv.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.5	1.5	1.5	4.0	4.0	4.0	8.6	8.4	8.3
Other Services	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.9	3.9	3.8
Total Government	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.2	2.2	2.3	3.0	3.0	3.1	10.4	10.8	10.5

Current month preliminary. Estimates based on March 2003 benchmark. Summing from unrounded numbers.

with metro area manufacturing employers rose in August, the fourth straight month with some increase. The current estimate of 11,500 production jobs is 500 more than one year ago and is approaching the 11,600 mark set in 2002.

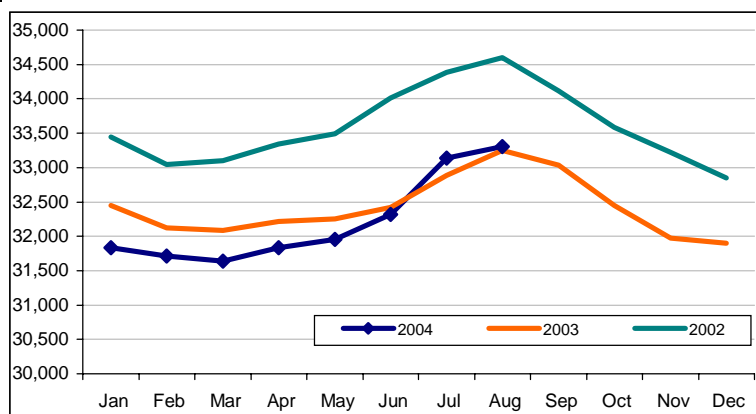
One reason for the typical loss in jobs in August is the reduction in government employment that occurs throughout the region. That includes jobs with city-sponsored recreation programs, summer school sessions, facility maintenance and cleaning operations, and other government-run camps and recreation sites. Throughout the region there were 460 fewer government jobs in August than in July and 200 less than one year ago. In addition to the loss in employment in government, construction employers reduced payroll in August.

Overall, employers in the region added nearly 200 jobs in August and the greatest increase came from em-

ployers in professional and business services. Many of the jobs with this group of employers are with temporary employment agencies that provide workers for area manufacturers. The second largest increase in jobs in August was with manufacturers. Employers have added over 1,300 manufacturing jobs since May, an increase that is better than over the same period in the previous two years. The total number of jobs with regional manufacturing employers rose to 33,300 in August.

The number of claims for unemployment compensation benefits filed

Manufacturing Jobs in West Central



by residents in the nine-county region dropped to 3,082 for the week ending September 11, 2004. That's the lowest number of claims in the same week since 2000. The 4-week running average ending September 11 was 3,290 in 2004 also the lowest since 2000 when the average was 2,255 claims for unemployment benefits filed by area residents.

Find the most current Labor Market Information at: [WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI](http://WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI)

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